ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE

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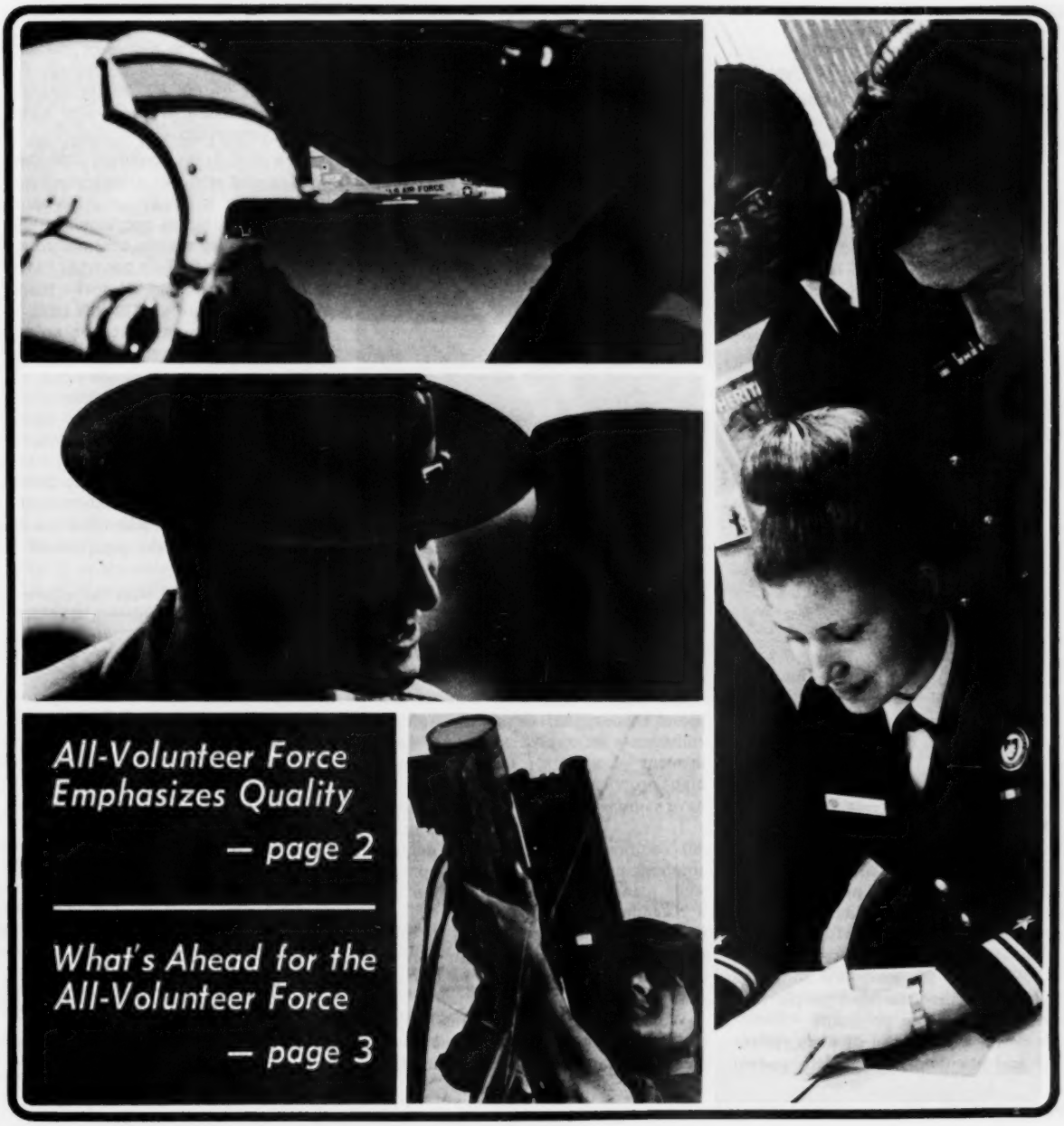

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Early Trends Hold Promise

Quality Stressed in All-Volunteer Force

If early trends hold true, the All-Volunteer Force concept is possible. This issue of COMMANDERS DIGEST *summarizes the latest findings of recruiting and reenlistment efforts aimed at achieving an All-Volunteer Force.*

No discussion of the All-Volunteer Force would be complete without a policy statement from highest Defense Department levels. Accordingly, remarks by Deputy Secretary of Defense William P. Clements Jr. at a recent Pentagon news briefing concerning the All-Volunteer Force follow:

By William P. Clements Jr.
Deputy Secretary of Defense

As you know, I have taken a close personal interest in the progress of our All-Volunteer Force program. Many other people in the Department of Defense are also deeply involved. It is my view that you gentlemen [news correspondents] as representative of the public must also be kept apprised of what we are doing. Therefore, this is the first of what I hope will be a series of monthly briefings for you on this particular subject. In this way, you will know what we are doing, the accomplishments, challenges and problems month-by-month. I don't think we should attempt to draw conclusions from any single month's statistics, but I do believe that over a period of months that we will all be able to assess this program in a straightforward manner and make changes and adjustments as are necessary to keep it on the right track.

Authority to induct men for military service under the Selective Service Law expired July 1. And, no young men have been drafted since last December.

President Nixon's program on ending use of the draft in peacetime has been pursued during the last six months while maintaining the readiness and strength of our forces and while physical and mental standards for entry and retention into the military service have been considerably tightened.

Our experience in operating for six months without using the draft provides, what I believe, is encouraging evidence that our All-Volunteer programs have been effective and that military personnel requirements for a military force of 2.22 million—the planned end-strength for FY 1974—can be met; *providing* the Congress and the American people continue to support the program.

However, a great deal of management effort and attention is needed to sustain the All-Volunteer Force. We need further Congressional action and support, particularly in solving problems in the Reserve Components and for health professionals. I hope that Congress will act promptly on our requested special pay act and that it will restore our combat arms bonus authority.

WILLIAM P. CLEMENTS JR.
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Statistics for FY 73 and for June show some encouraging things, such as the enlistments in combat arms and the enlistment of women. They also show a high proportion of young people who have completed high school courses.

I want to assure you that in this All-Volunteer program we are definitely emphasizing quality. We will preserve some management flexibility in our quality standards, and the forces will vary those standards carefully and as appropriate from time to time. In every instance a quality force will be our overriding guideline.

We still have some problems which at this stage of the game are not by any means permanent or lacking in solutions. I view them in the nature of challenges. We have a very small percentage shortfall in our overall FY 73 recruiting and a larger shortfall in our Guard and Reserve Components.

However, I am confident that the recruiting and retention experience we have had to date indicates an All-Volunteer Force is feasible at preplanned military levels. I believe we can continue to make this concept work. I do not want anybody to be surprised when we make management changes and adjustments from time to time. We are embarked on an enterprise that this society has never tried before in modern times. We are going to make the necessary adjustments as we go along. It would be silly to jump to conclusions on the basis of what we know today, and that is why I am arranging for you to have these briefings on a regular basis, so that you and I both will be able to make reasoned judgments, as the months pass, about this program.

I am very pleased with the efforts put in and the results achieved thus far by all four of the Services. The All-Volunteer Force which our society wants can, in my considered judgment, be achieved and maintained.

RETURN TO THE DRAFT?
"WE'RE NOT."

On July 18, 1973, Deputy Defense Secretary William P. Clements Jr. met with members of the Pentagon press corps to answer questions concerning progress and objectives of the All-Volunteer Force. During the conference a correspondent asked the key question, "At what point would you go back to the draft on a shortfall?"

"We're not," replied Mr. Clements.

Looking to the Future

What's Ahead for the All-Volunteer Force

By Lieutenant General
Robert C. Taber, USA
Principal Deputy Assistant
Secretary of Defense
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

For over 30 years the Armed Forces relied on the draft to meet a portion of its manpower needs. The goal of an All-Volunteer Force was outlined by President Nixon in 1968, several months before he took office. The Department of Defense began planning for the end of the draft four years ago. It intensified these efforts when the decision was made to request that the Congress extend the draft for only two years after June 1971. Actual inductions ended ahead of schedule in December 1972, and on July 1, 1973, the President's authority to draft individuals for military service expired. Thus the shift to an All-Volunteer Force represented the policy of the President and the will of the people as expressed by their representatives in the Congress. Our task is to maintain the strength and effectiveness of the Armed Forces without the crutch of conscription.

Many important actions were taken in preparation for the end of the draft:

- Military pay was increased substantially at the entry level.
- Service recruiting systems were expanded and modernized.
- ROTC subsistence payments were raised and the number of scholarships was increased.
- Improvements were made in the quality of military life.

These actions have been effective in attracting more volunteers and increasing reenlistment rates.

Our experience during Fiscal Year 1973 is useful in judging the ability of the Armed Forces to operate without the draft. Less than 35,000 men were drafted during the period, July to December 1972, and there were no draft calls during the period, January to June 1973.

Strength Levels

As shown on the chart on page 4, military strength on June 30, 1973, was 2,253,000 compared to a planned strength of 2,278,000.

At the end of the fiscal year the Department of Defense, as a whole, was 25,000 below planned strength, a shortage of 1.1 percent. The Army shortage was 1.7 percent, the Navy 1.6 percent, the Marine Corps 0.5 percent; the Air Force was only 0.1 percent below its strength objective. These shortages are not large when viewed in the context of the management difficulties involved in making the transition from a draft-dominated force to one which relies on volunteer enlistments. Year-end shortages and overages were common even in draft-dominated years because it is difficult to predict losses, reenlistments and enlistments with absolute precision.

Enlistment Experience

During Fiscal Year 1973, the Services recruited 402,000 men and 21,000 women for the enlisted ranks and met 97 percent of the recruiting objective. The Air Force and Marine Corps met their goals. The shortfall in Army (4,000) and Navy (8,000) recruiting was due primarily to higher entrance standards established by these two Services during the last six months.

Maintenance of a quality force is, and should be, a priority objective. In the final analysis, quality is measured by

Army General Oversees All-Volunteer Plan

Army Lieutenant General Robert C. Taber, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) since May 1971, oversees a number of important planning and programming functions in support of the All Volunteer Force. His other DoD-level duties and responsibilities embrace a far-ranging number of projects including military personnel legislation, off-duty education, the Jobs For Veterans program, Project Transition, Equal Opportunity, Armed Force Information, Domestic Action, Reserve Affairs, Civilian Personnel Policy and the Armed Forces Chaplains.

A graduate of Cornell University in 1938, General Taber was an artilleryman in World War II, serving overseas in the China-Burma-India theater.

His postwar career found him in many fields, from airborne operations to materiel development to strategic planning.

For more than a year (February 1970 to April 1971), he was the Commanding General of the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) in Germany.

A long time veteran of Indo-China,

Lieutenant General Robert C. Taber, USA

General Taber was at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, served as Chief of the MAAG group in Cambodia in 1963, and in 1967 became Assistant Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff for U.S. Army Vietnam.

Navy is recruiting high quality enlistees and is filling all "school seat" vacancies (U.S. Navy Photo)

performance on the job. Enlistment standards cite four factors to predict if any applicant is of the required quality:

- **Trainability**—as measured by mental aptitude tests.
- **Motivation**—as measured by the applicant's school record and recruiter interviews.
- **Moral**—as measured by the applicant's behavior in civil life.
- **Medical**—as measured by the entrance physical examination.

Enlistment standards are imperfect predictors of future performance. For this reason the Services continue to evaluate new recruits during the initial training period and screen out those who lack the aptitude, motivation, discipline and physical ability required to perform adequately in units.

The Military Services have progressively raised their mental aptitude standards for enlistment during the past year. As shown on the table on page 5, DoD as a whole is obtaining a mix of volunteers who, on the basis of test scores, are more readily trainable than those who entered service during the years of heavy draft calls.

The slight decline in the percentage of new entries in Mental Groups I & II (above average) has been more than offset by an increase in Group III (average). It is significant that the proportion of Group IV personnel (below average) accepted for military service has declined steadily. The enlistment standards currently used by the Services exclude Group IVs who score in the bottom half of this category.

Special emphasis is placed on attracting a high proportion of young men who have completed high school, because high school graduates have lower disciplinary rates than those who have not graduated. However, we do not disqualify all those who have not completed high school, because four out of five nongraduates complete their tours of enlistment satisfactorily and are valued members of the Armed Forces.

A second chart on page 5 shows the proportion of high school graduates among new male entries during the last three fiscal years.

During the last half of FY 1973 the Army established a firm objective of no less than 70 percent high school graduates. Army recruiters met this higher ob-

Military Strengths, June 30, 1973

(In Thousands)

	Budget Plan*	Actual Strength	Percent Short
Army	815	801	1.7
Navy	574	565	1.6
Marine Corps	197	196	.5
Air Force	692	691	.1
DoD Total	2,278	2,253	1.1

*Adjusted for Vietnam withdrawal.

GROUND COMBAT—Enlistment bonuses are helping Army recruit high quality combat soldiers for four-year tours. (U.S. Army Photo)

jective but fell short in enlisting the total number of recruits needed. For FY 1974, the Army is removing the 70 percent objective and will rely on new pre- and post-entry screens in basic and specialized training to separate men, both high school and non-high school graduates, who are inadequately motivated or who lack discipline. In this way, the quality of Army men assigned to units will be maintained.

There has been no relaxation of physical and moral standards for enlistment. In fact, fewer waivers are now being granted those who have past delinquency records in civilian life.

A good indication of how quality is being maintained is the favorable trend in disciplinary rates. The number of courts-martial and non-judicial punishments peaked in FY 1969 and 1970 and is now on a downward trend in relation to overall strength. Absenteeism and desertion rates continue to decline from their FY 1971 peak. The worldwide trend in drug abuse in the Services is down, although drug abuse in Europe is still a serious problem.

In summary, the successful recruiting record of FY 1973 was achieved without sacrificing quality goals.

Ground Combat Enlistments

One illuminating example of the new trend in recruiting is the Army's experience in enlisting men for the ground combat arms. Several years ago, enlistments for these specialties averaged only 227 a month compared to a requirement of 5,000. The deficit was made up with either draftees or enlistees who did not select a military specialty. Aggressive recruiting, bolstered by offering a choice of overseas locations and unit assignments, raised combat arms enlistments to a level of 3,000 per month. In June 1972, a bonus of $1,500 was offered to Army and Marine combat arms volunteers who enlisted for four years. On May 1 the bonus was raised to $2,500 on a test basis. With the aid of the enlistment bonus, the number of ground combat enlistments rose to 4,550 in June compared to a recruiting objective of 3,500.

Our experience with ground combat enlistments has convinced us that enlistment bonuses can be effective in channeling enlistees into specialties experiencing shortages. The use of the bonus has also demonstrated its value in encourag-

Proportion of High School Graduates Among New Entries *

	FY 71	FY 72	FY 73
Army	67	62	62
Navy	78	76	69
Marine Corps	50	50	50
Air Force	87	83	87

* Excludes those who passed a GED test to obtain high school equivalency.

Mental Ability of New Entries—DoD

(In Percent)

Mental Group	Fiscal Year 1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
I & II (Above Average)	38	36	35	34	34
III (Average)	38	41	43	48	53
IV (Below Average)	24	23	22	18	13
V (Not Eligible)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100

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GUARD AND RESERVE—Selected Reserve strength was 6 percent short in June 1973. DoD has asked Congress for enlistment and reenlistment bonus authority for Reservists.
(Kansas National Guard Photo)

ing longer enlistments, thereby reducing training costs and personnel turnover.

Reenlistment Experience

In FY 1973, the Department of Defense achieved 96 percent of the first-term reenlistment goal. The Services reenlisted 57,000 first-termers compared to an objective of 59,000. In FY 1973, 24 percent of the first-termers who met reenlistment standards signed up for another tour of service. This reenlistment rate is the highest since FY 1965. The number and rate of first-term reenlistments is expected to be more favorable in a volunteer environment than in a draft environment.

Service plans called for the reenlistment of nearly 125,000 career personnel in FY 1973, and over 129,000 career reenlistments were obtained—or 103 percent of the objective. The FY 1973 DoD career reenlistment rate of 83 percent is the highest since FY 1966. Present indications are that, except for imbalances in certain skills, career forces of the desired size can be sustained.

Outlook: FY 1974-1976

Although FY 1973 recruiting results were encouraging, manpower planners realize that further improvements in recruiting performance will be necessary to achieve and sustain a fully manned and viable All-Volunteer Force.

In FY 1973, 402,000 men enlisted for military service. More than 85 percent (342,000) were "true volunteers"—individuals who would have volunteered in the absence of the draft. The four Military Services estimate they will need about 373,000 new male volunteers during FY 1974—31,000 more than the number of "true volunteers" during FY 1973.

The Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force will be able to meet their enlistment needs in FY 1974 and in future years. The Army, on the other hand, must improve its recruiting record by about 25 percent in FY 1974 compared to FY 1973. The Army recently removed the restriction on recruiting non-high school graduates to assist the recruiters in achieving FY 1974 recruiting goals.

The Army faces a challenging task because its recruiting objective is nearly half of the total required by the Defense Department. The Army recruiting problem will ease somewhat in future years as improved retention and longer enlistment terms result in lower annual replacement needs.

The major recruiting and retention problems for the Active Forces in the years ahead lie less in obtaining gross numbers than in gaining and keeping specialists with critical skills and in channeling recruits into shortage skills. Building on past experience with bonuses and incentive pays, the Department of Defense has put together a package of incentive pays and bonuses embodied in the Uniformed Services Special Pay Act, which is now being considered by the Congress. This legislation will provide the tools needed to solve such remaining problems as the procurement and retention of

Provisions of the Uniformed Services Special Pay Act

- Enlistment Bonus for Shortage Skills.
- Selective Reenlistment Bonus.
- Officer Variable Incentive Pay.
- Medical Officer Special and Variable Incentive Pays.
- Enlistment and Reenlistment Bonuses for Reservists.

MENTAL ABILITIES—Persons who score in Mental Group I and II are capable of mastering the most complex military jobs. (U.S. Navy Photo)

REENLISTMENTS—Indications are that the number of first-term reenlistments will be more favorable in a volunteer environment. (U.S. Air Force Photo)

health professionals, retention of critical officer and enlisted specialists, and the attraction of recruits into skills where shortages exist. The major provisions of the Uniformed Services Special Pay Act are shown in the table on page 6.

Women In Uniform

Women will have an important and expanding role in the All-Volunteer Force. The present plan is to double the number of women in military service, from 40,900 in FY 1973 to 80,800 in FY 1977 (these figures exclude female officers in the healing arts). Currently, more than 80 percent of all job specialties Defense-wide are open to women.

In FY 1972, 14,000 women enlisted in the four Services combined. In FY 1973, about 21,000 women were enlisted. A substantial increase in female enlistments is planned for FY 1974. The enlistment of more women, of course, reduces the need for male enlistments. It also brings into the Armed Forces a group of talented people capable of performing a wide variety of skilled jobs. All women who enlist are high school graduates and have mental ability test scores of average or above.

The Reserve Components

During the years when the draft was a major source of military manpower, many young men were attracted to the Guard and Reserve as a means of avoiding active military service. The strength of the Reserve Components began to fall as draft calls were reduced, starting in 1971. The strength of the Selected Reserve has fallen about 60,000, or 66 percent below the FY 1973 mandated floor. We need to keep this strength from dropping below the 911,000 average strength programmed for FY 1974 and to build a back-up to the mobilization manning objective of 971,000 in the next two fiscal years.

Although recruiting in the Reserve Components has improved, the results are still below desired levels. The Reserve Components have been provided the resources to expand their recruiting organization and recruiting publicity. The Army, Marine Corps and Air Force are now conducting tests to determine the relative appeal of enlistment options requiring shorter periods of participation in the Selected Reserve—three or four years of participation in unit drills instead of the standard six-year drilling requirement.

Better recruiting and fuller public support are essential for the Reserve Forces, but these actions alone are not enough.

COMBAT READY—Screening during training will be intensified to insure that Army units receive qualified men. (U.S. Army Photo)

Needed also is assistance from the Congress through providing the additional incentives included in the Uniformed Services Special Pay Act and in other legislative proposals pertaining to insurance and medical coverage for Reservists.

Of particular importance are the provisions in the Uniformed Services Special Pay Act which would authorize enlistment and reenlistment bonuses for Reservists. Without a draft, and in order to be effective and fully manned, the Selected Reserve needs the same kinds of financial incentives as the Active Forces.

Summary

The challenge facing the Department of Defense is to maintain an All-Volunteer Active Force of 2.2 million men and a Selected Reserve of close to 1 million. This Nation has never attempted to support a force of this magnitude without the aid of the draft. I do not underestimate the difficulty of the task ahead. There will be setbacks, and new problems will arise to replace those which are solved. But as time goes on, we will learn how to solve these problems. It is important that we resist the temptation of either excessive euphoria or pessimism. Recruiting successes or failures in any given month do not necessarily reflect the underlying trends.

A fully successful All-Volunteer Force is within reach. We urgently need Congressional approval of the Uniformed Services Special Pay Act, which is designed to solve overall manning problems in the Reserve Components and to enable the Active Forces to attract and retain critical enlisted and officer specialists. It is equally urgent that we receive the full support and understanding of military commanders, their staffs and non-commissioned officers. What is at stake is not only the success of the All-Volunteer Force but the strength of the Armed Forces and the security of our Nation.

Services Near July Recruiting Targets

Deputy Secretary of Defense William P. Clements Jr., announced that, except for the Army, all Services substantially met July recruiting targets at very good quality levels.

During July, the Air Force exceeded its objective of 6,174 male nonprior service enlistments, attaining a percentage of 101; the Navy achieved 97 percent of its 8,100-man goal; and the Marine Corps recruited 92 percent of a 5,685-man target. The Army obtained 76 percent of its enlistment objective of 17,300.

Secretary Clements pointed out that the Army recruited 8,000 men during the last week of July and that 83 percent of the Navy's recruits were school eligibles, again filling all available school seats.

MALE NON-PRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENTS

Service	Enlistments	Target	Percent of Target
Army	13,117	17,300	76
Navy	7,866	8,100	97
Marine Corps	5,203	5,685	92
Air Force	6,220	6,174	101
DoD Total	32,406	37,259	87

Mr. Clements said the high school graduate proportion of enlistees was favorable in all the Services: Army 66 percent, Navy 76 percent, Marine Corps 58 percent and Air Force 95 percent.

He also announced that the Army has reported that 2,311 men entered the combat arms field for assignments into infantry, armor and artillery MOS, with 51 percent or 1,185 accepting the $2,500 bonus and a four-year enlistment. The combat arms objective for July was 4,200. The Marine Corps reported 53 men or 19 percent of its 280-man objective enlisted for the combat arms bonus. However, the Corps did not "re-start" its bonus program until July 16.

Considering June and July together, 6,900 Army combat arms enlistments were obtained against the two-month objective of 7,700, or 90 percent.

HIGHER STANDARDS—Marine Corps raised their enlistment standards. Recruiting is close to target.
(U.S. Navy Photo)

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